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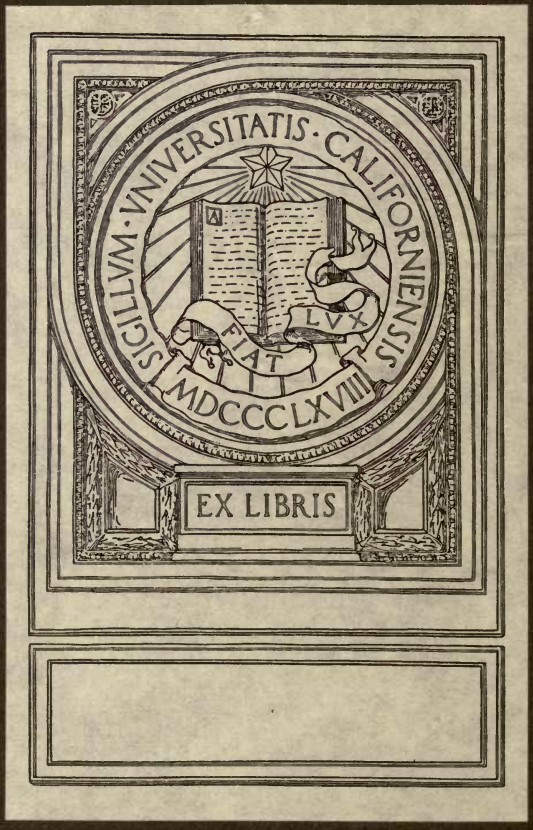
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The beautifully shaded motor driveway in Point Pelee National Park.

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The National Parks of Canada in Ontario

Canada has established a system of National Parks which can be rated as amongst the finest in the world. For this purpose more than 12,000 square miles of territory in some of the most outstanding scenic regions of the country have been set aside by statute for the "benefit, education, and enjoyment of the people." Including the mountain splendour of the Canadian Rockies, the placid beauty of the prairie lake-lands, and the island-studded waterways of Eastern Canada, these reservations carry a strong appeal to those who enjoy spending their vacations in the great outdoors, where conditions, as far as possible, are kept in their primal state.

In the preservation of this bounteous heritage Canada has had an eye for the future, for these reservations are in reality museums of the wilderness where natural conditions will be perpetuated. In these park areas generations of future Canadians will be enabled to study the flora and fauna as it has existed for many years, unspoiled by the encroachments of civilization.

Sharing in this great chain of playgrounds, Ontario possesses three beautiful units of National Park reservations. These comprise a number of the Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence river, thirty islands in Georgian bay, and the long peninsula stretching south into lake Erie and known as Point Pelee. Here may be found the requisites of an ideal vacation—opportunities for relaxation, sport or solitude.

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The broad sandy beach at Point Pelee extends for miles.

Point Pelee National Park

Ontario offers to the holiday seeker a great number of vacational areas in varied settings of sparkling lakes and streams, wooded hills and valleys, blue skies and gorgeous sunsets. Of these, few compare with the south-western section of the province bordered by the silver-sanded shores of lake Erie. In this beautiful region is found Point Pelee National Park, situated in the county of Essex, and reached by motor highway from Leamington, a distance of approximately eight miles. Triangular in shape, the Park stretches south into lake Erie for several miles, forming the most southerly extension of mainland in Canada. The shore line is an outstanding feature, extending for a total distance of thirteen miles, with beautiful, broad, silvery beaches shelving gently into the inviting blue waters of the lake, providing an ideal playground. Other recreational advantages of the Park include camping, fishing and aquatic sports.

In physical aspect the Park is a place of unusual beauty, unique in supporting vegetation of an almost semi-tropical nature, both luxurious and dense. Flora intruding from the south and rarely discovered in such northern latitudes, includes the cactus plant, red mulberry and many other botanical species indigenous as a rule to more southern areas. The wonderful forest growth of the Park including red cedar, black walnut, hackberry, sassafras, sycamore, and several species of oak provides delightful shade.

In addition to its popularity as a recreational area Point Pelee Park is one of the outstanding migratory bird sanctuaries in Eastern Canada. The Park lies within the main route followed by thousands of wild birds in their northern and southern migrations. Wild ducks, Canada geese and swans all find a perfect shelter and resting place in the hundreds of acres of marshland contained in the Park, where an abundance of food is available in the beds of wild rice. Many species of bird life, usually found in more southern localities are either common residents or regular migrants to Point Pelee, including the Carolina wren, cardinal, mocking-bird, and blue-winged warbler. Beautifully plumaged pheasants make their home in

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the Park, and together with quail are steadily increasing in numbers. The entire Park area offers naturalists, especially bird lovers, and botanists, an excellent field for study.

Point Pelee has been connected with many episodes in early Canadian history. A cairn with bronze tablet erected in the Park by the Department of the Interior honours the memory of the explorers, missionaries, and soldiers whose adventurous spirits led them to this region in years past. Chief among the events so commemorated are the visit in 1670 of Fathers Dollier and Galinée—the first Europeans known to have ascended the Great Lakes to what is now Sault Ste. Marie; the unfortunate massacre of a detachment of British soldiers in 1763, who under Lieutenant Abraham Cuyler were proceeding to the relief of Detroit during the Pontiac Indian conspiracy; the landing made on the Point by General Brock in 1812 during his advance on Detroit; and the battle fought at Pelee Island during the Rebellion of Upper Canada in 1838.

The local administration of the Park is carried out by a superintendent residing at Leamington assisted by a Park warden whose office and residence are located within the Park boundaries and who is responsible for the enforcement of Park regulations laid down by the National Parks Service. The co-operation of visitors is requested in the protection of both the flora and fauna of the Park, and in the observance of the few regulations prescribed. Owing to the risk incurred no open fires are allowed within the boundaries of the Park. Camps should be kept clean and tidy. Hunting within the Park is not permitted and the possession of firearms is strictly prohibited. Dogs must not be allowed to run at large. All persons camping in the Park must secure a permit from the Park warden for which a nominal charge is made.

Any further information regarding this or any other National Park may be secured from the Park warden or direct from the Commissioner of National Parks, Department of the Interior, Ottawa.

A typical recreational centre in Point Pelee National Park.

Gordon island—One of the many beautiful campgrounds in the St. Lawrence Islands National Park.

St. Lawrence Islands National Park

One of the most beautiful examples of river landscape on the North American continent is the fifty mile stretch of the St. Lawrence between Kingston and Brockville. Here the blue-green waters of the river are studded with some 1,700 picturesque islands which vary in size from less than an acre to several square miles. Rich groves of pine, maple, oak and birch rise above the bluffs of grey granite or sweep down to the river's edge to cast darker shades of colour across the emerald of its waters. "Manitona" the Indians called it, or "Garden of the Great Spirit," and its beauty well deserves the name, for Nature has laid out here a paradise of loveliness.

For more than fifty years the Thousand Islands, as they are called, have been a Mecca for the summer visitor, so much so that most of the islands are now privately owned. As early as 1904, however, the Government of Canada set aside as national reservations a number of these islands, which now form the St. Lawrence Islands National Park, and which have been dedicated to the service of the people for healthful recreation in the midst of natural beauty.

Many improvements have been made on a number of these islands for the comfort and convenience of visitors. Attractively designed pavilions and shelters have been erected, and tables, benches and outdoor stoves, with firewood, provided. Each island or group of islands, according to location, is in charge of a caretaker, who is responsible for the observance of Park regulations, and the issuing of the necessary camping permit. Several of these islands contain fine bathing beaches, while excellent fishing is obtainable in the adjacent waters.

The island parks on which improvements have been made for the comfort of visitors together with the nearest points of approach follow: Cedar,

near Kingston; Georgina near Ivy Lea; Grenadier (western portion) near Rockport; Gordon, Aubrey (Burnt), and Beau Rivage islands near Gananoque; and Stovin (Picnic) near Brockville. Broder island, the most easterly of these park units is just opposite the town of Morrisburg. In addition to these islands there is also a mainland reservation of several acres at Mallorytown Landing.

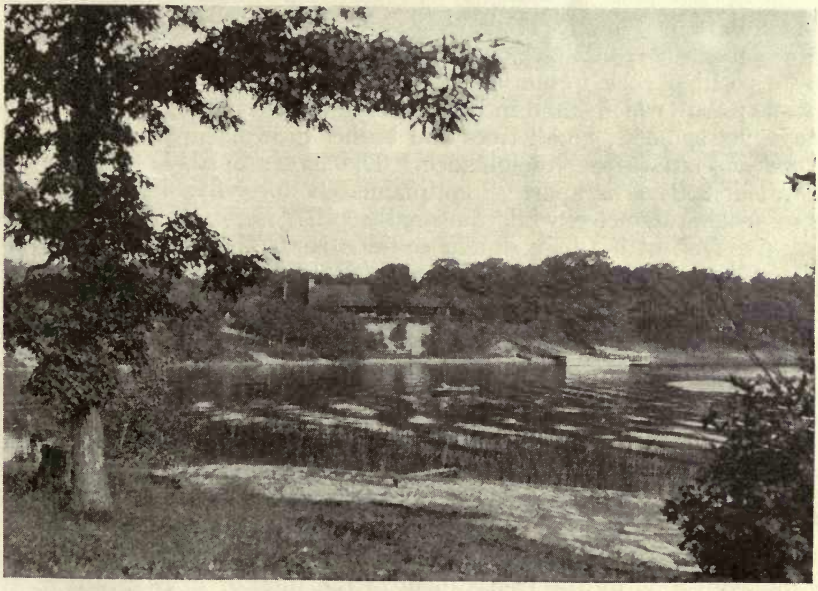
St. Lawrence Islands National Park is readily accessible from Provincial highway No. 2, which is the direct route from Windsor, Ontario, to Montreal, Quebec.

Georgian Bay Islands National Park

Few sections of Eastern Canada rival the Georgian Bay as a summer holiday resort, with its bays, capes and its blue waters studded with upwards of 30,000 islands. Nature has indeed endowed this region with a lavish hand and while its beauty is known to thousands who find there fresh attractions year by year, it still remains an area of unspoiled loveliness.

Here the Government of Canada has provided a National Park comprising some thirty islands amidst these beautiful surroundings, thereby making possible their use as public recreational areas. Of these islands Beausoleil is the largest, where many improvements have been carried out by the National Parks Service for the comfort and enjoyment of those who annually make it their holiday vacation ground. The word "Beausoleil" is a French translation of the Indian for "Land seen in the beautiful sunlight" or "Land of the beautiful sun." This charming designation no doubt owes its origin to the wonderful effects produced on the waters of Georgian Bay by the sunrises and sunsets for which the region is noted.

The Georgian Bay region is associated with many stirring events in early Canadian history. Champlain, the famous French explorer spent the



A picturesque corner of Beausoleil island—Georgian Bay Islands National Park.

winter of 1615 among the Huron Indians in this district. His name has been given to a rocky point on Beausoleil island. Following the massacre of the Hurons by the Iroquois in 1649, a number of survivors are believed to have taken refuge on Beausoleil.

Many Indian legends exist in connection with this island. According to one of these, an Indian windigo or supernatural being called Kitchikiwana, during his labours in creating the Great Lakes system, made an island on which he might have a place to rest. This island according to the legend is Beausoleil, where existing depressions are supposed to mark the spot upon which his shoulders rested.

One of the finest fishing grounds in Eastern Canada, the Georgian Bay district offers the angler a choice of many varieties of game fish, including bass, maskinonge, pickerel, and lake trout, all of a size and weight to thrill the most ardent fisherman. Guides and boats are readily procurable at any of the many resorts which border the island waters.

The towns of Midland and Penetanguishene provide the southern gateways to the Georgian Bay Island system, and both constitute excellent outfitting centres for the tourist. Launches, boats and canoes in addition to other sport accessories may be secured at very reasonable cost. Throughout the entire Georgian Bay region are found many excellent hotels, boarding houses and restaurants which cater to visitors at moderate rates. All these points are accessible by first-class motor highways from central and western Ontario and are also served by the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railways.

Flowerpot Island

One of the most interesting sections of the Georgian Bay Islands National Park is Flowerpot island, situated at the extreme northern end of Bruce peninsula, in the mouth of Georgian bay. The island owes its name to peculiar rock formations which take the form of two picturesque limestone pillars which stand in bold relief against the lake horizon like two immense flower pots. Small trees and bushes growing in the interstices of the tops accentuate the resemblance. The larger of these pillars, which stand about 250 yards apart, is approximately forty-five feet high with a base six feet in diameter, while the smaller pillar rises to a height of about twenty-five feet, with a base similar to the other. These unique formations are the results of erosion by the elements for ages past.

On the eastern face of the island cliffs of weathered limestone rise to a height of 300 feet above the level of the lake, while the rocky bluffs are covered with heavy growths of spruce, pine and balsam fir. Located in the cliffs of both the northeast and southeast sides are a number of very interesting caves. One cave in particular is fully one hundred feet deep, with a ceiling over twenty feet high, and is formed of three arches through which there are wonderful vistas of Georgian bay. Another large cave contains a pool of water several feet across, which is fed by a continuously running spring.

Flowerpot island was once the property of the Chippawa Indians, and until its acquisition by the Department of the Interior in 1930 was held in trust by the Department of Indian Affairs. The island is regarded with

considerable superstition by the older Indians of the district, who will rarely land on its shores, and if compelled to do so will leave an offering for the Great Spirit who is supposed to inhabit the place.

A charming Indian legend relates that a prince and princess of different tribes who were forbidden by their parents to marry, eloped and fled to what is now Flowerpot island. They were never known to return, and the superstition exists to this day among the Indians that the two pillars or flowerpots represent their effigies in stone. Old residents of the district also relate that in one of the caves or rock shelves in the face of the cliff a number of skeletons were found the size of which indicated that the remains were those of a giant race.

One of the "flowerpots" on Flowerpot island.

Trails have been cut through the woods and up the cliffs leading to the best known caves, while ravines have been bridged along the trails. Many other improvements have been made for the comfort of visitors, including the building of a large dock in a small harbour on the southeast side of the island, into which a channel has been blasted for the safe entry of boats.

Flowerpot island is easily reached by motor boat from Tobermory harbour, via motor highway from Wiarton, "The Gateway to Bruce Peninsula."

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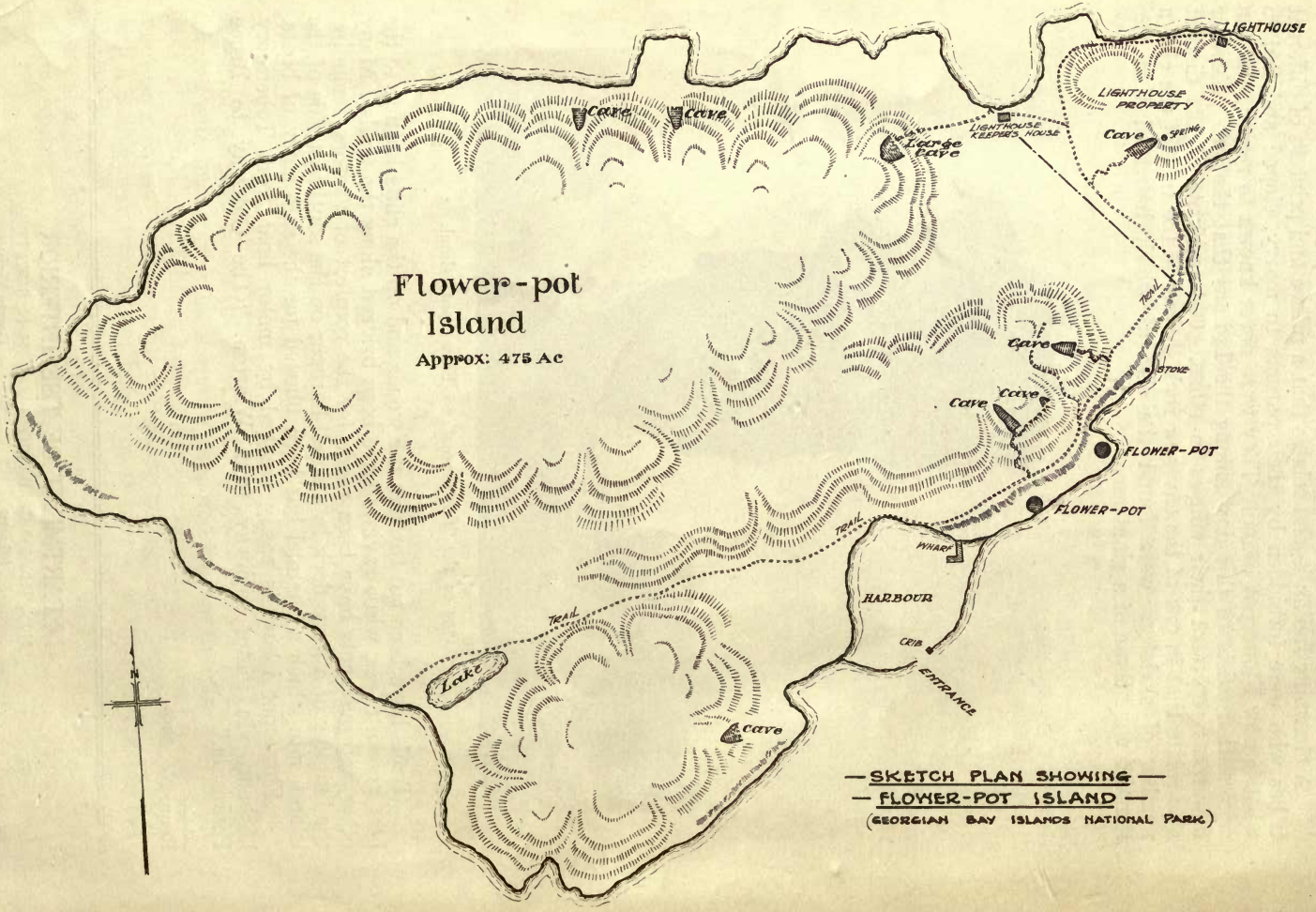
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HON. THOMAS G. MURPHY, Minister
H. H. ROWATT, Deputy Minister
J. B. HARKIN
Commissioner, National Parks of Canada
OTTAWA



— SKETCH PLAN SHOWING —
— FLOWER-POT ISLAND —
(GEORGIAN BAY ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK)

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